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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Afro-Asian Conference Developments

The question of Communist representation at the Bandung conference has finally been settled. The conference secretariat has announced that Chou En-lai will lead a Chinese Communist delegation of 24 persons and Ho Chi Minh a 15-man delegation from north Vietnam. The American embassy in Djakarta believes that the Communist delegations will be accompanied by large numbers of "advisers and technicians."

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The problem of drawing up an agenda remains unresolved. Moreover, growing information regarding topics that various countries wish to discuss reveal a wide discrepancy of views which is bound to complicate the problem.

25X1 Indonesian ideas for the agenda closely parallel India's [redacted] The Burmese have a similar outlook and among the three of them they may be able to force through the secretariat a provisional agenda having a strong neutralist bias.

The known views of other countries, however, are quite different. Ceylon, a Colombo power, wants to discuss international communism and regional defense. Premier Ali of Pakistan, who visualizes himself in the role of leader of the pro-Western group at Bandung, has sought US advice regarding agenda items which would effectively counter the Indian proposals. He is particularly interested in issues which might promote Sino-Indian friction.

25X1 Arab interests, so far as the agenda is concerned, are, in general, more specific and reflect bitter animosity toward Israel and the French in North Africa. [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] Peiping propaganda all the while continues to indicate that its major effort will be directed toward anti-colonialism, gaining support for its claim to Formosa, prevention of military alliances among Asian nations, and the encouragement of "neutrality."

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The American embassy in Addis Ababa reports that the Ethiopian delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Aklilou, is probably the strongest that could be assembled. The embassy has been warned, however, not to expect Ethiopia to be an aggressive leader, and that it will, in fact, probably side with the Indian "neutralist bloc" for fear of antagonizing either the Communists or the Arabs. Ethiopia undoubtedly will side with the Arab-Asian countries on colonial and racial issues. On the other hand, it has been generally identified with the West, is strongly anti-Communist and despite the foregoing, probably will resist the Communists at Bandung.

With regard to other delegations, Laos has definitely appointed Premier Katay as its chief delegate. Almost immediately thereafter, ex-king Sihanouk was officially announced as head of the Cambodian delegation. As representatives of countries under the "umbrella" of the Manila pact they will be representatives of some consequence, and the Indians may well attempt to induce them into the neutralist camp.

The Foreign Ministry of Vietnam has stated that Premier Diem also plans to attend the Bandung meeting. His attendance at once is a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge arises out of the presence of Ho Chi Minh who in the eyes of many conferees is the epitome of triumphant Asian nationalism. The opportunity, of course, is the possibility of exposing Ho as the instrument of a foreign power.

The Indian delegation, headed by Nehru and Krishna Menon, totals ten. The American embassy in New Delhi comments that in general the delegation is comprised of level-headed, experienced civil servants whose outlook is essentially conservative. Although the views of Nehru and Menon will undoubtedly prevail it seems unlikely that either will take as an extreme position in the "mixed company" at Bandung as Nehru did in his parliament speech of 31 March.

In Damascus, persistent press reports indicate that Foreign Minister Khalid Al-Azm will head the Syrian delegation. Azm, an able, but opportunistic politician, is the dominant figure in the present cabinet. The common denominator of his heterogeneous political supporters is neutralism tinged in varying degrees with anti-Westernism. Under these circumstances, the Syrian delegation can hardly be counted among the "friendly" representatives. They are not expected, however, to get far out of line if the Arabs act more or less as a bloc.

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